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MODERN FAIRYLAND

BY
ELCY BURNHAM

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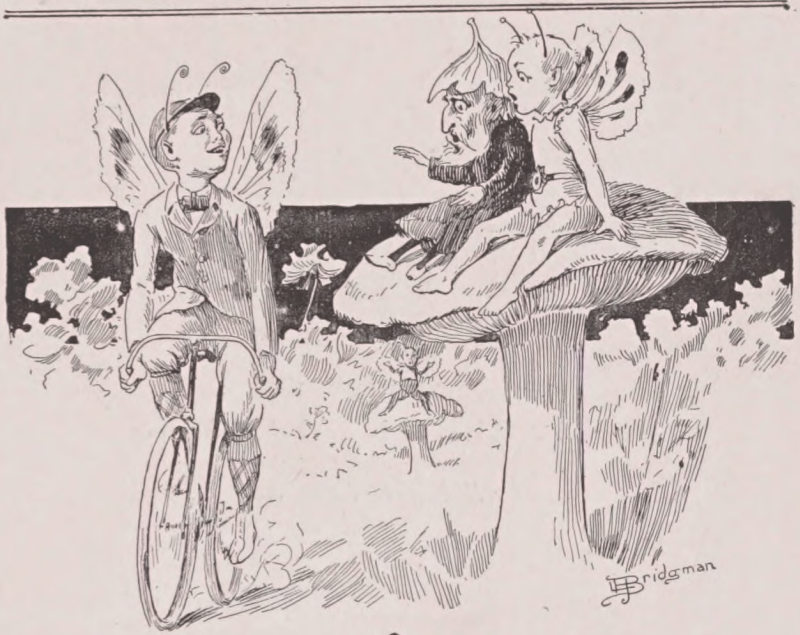
Modern Fairyland



By

Elcy Burnham.

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ARENA PRESS.

TO THE "IDEAL UNCLE"

OF

THE LONG AGO "THEN"

AND

THE EVER PRESENT "NOW,"

R. C. B.

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PREFACE.

Where is Fairyland? Where are the fairies?

"On hill, in dale, forest, or mead,
By paved fountain or by rushing brook,
Or by the beached margent of the sea."

And yet we do not find the tiny people there! Where are they nowadays?

"Did you ever see such impudence?"

p. 64

MODERN FAIRYLAND.

CHAPTER I.

THE INFANT FAIRY.

COULD anything be cuter and more huggable than a wee baby fairy? Who is there that has not longed to see a really, truly full-grown fairy? And then to think of something smaller even than that—*a baby fairy!* Strange as it may seem, there was at one time such a wonderfully curious being. Hardly had this infant fairy opened her hazel eyes when a hundred court pygmies went to proclaim the news throughout Fairydom.

"Hail to the little Princess!" cried the sturdy trumpeters. My! how quickly the news spread! The birds whispered the tidings to the flowers, and they in turn

rang out the sweet song as the soft winds blew the stamen-tongues back and forth in the bell-like flower-cups.

The baby's parents, none other than the King and Queen of Fairyland, were quite beside themselves with joy. Why, the King actually indulged in a dance which very much resembled a fisher's hornpipe! Imagine him holding his sceptre in one hand, his royal robe in the other, and dancing until his crown fell off and rolled like a hoop behind the throne!

The Queen became very anxious when the tiny mite remained out of her sight for a second.

As for the baby, it can safely be said that she was one of the best babies in the world. The Queen thought her positively THE best, as was natural and which is the case with every true mother.

This baby was no different from others

except for her size. Of course she was sweet and pretty, but she caused a great deal of work and worry. She had to be rocked in her oak-leaf cradle, given a morning sponge, and dressed every day in a newly spun spider's web, wrapped in blankets stuffed with birds' down, kissed, hugged, cuddled, and, in fact, spoiled after the manner of every only child.

However, this tiny Princess had an exceptionally good disposition or she could not have stood all the attentions given to her. Little philosopher, she slept through it all and never even glanced at the group of admiring fairies around her cradle.

They raved over the tiny feet, the arms, the hands, the mouth, and the pretty golden ringlets nestling in the soft neck. When she was asleep the fairies wept because they could not see her eyes, but the more they deplored this the sounder

the baby Princess slept. Indeed, she breathed so loudly at times that a series of tiny snores electrified every one present. This was certainly peculiar, consequently a note was made of the fact in the Court Record.

It must here be explained that a baby fairy is expected, after ten days or so, to try its little wings and after the manner of birds to learn to fly and then to take care of itself. When the tenth day arrived with the baby Princess she slept sounder than ever before, showing no signs whatever of taking her first lesson in flying. A careful examination was made and it was found that the wings had barely started to grow. This was appallingly backward. Every one was troubled.

The Princess was watched very carefully, but the eleventh day showed no change,

nor the twelfth day, nor the thirteenth, and so on until four months had passed.

Then it was that a strange trait was discovered. The nurse at one time left the Princess alone (which of course was against orders), and when she returned—what do you suppose?—her little Highness was out of the cradle, crawling in an undignified way on her hands and knees. The nurse was amazed. She had never seen a creeping baby before. She drew near her charge, wondering what the strange child would do next.

"Perhaps her Highness is not feeling well," said the nurse, puzzled to know what medicine to administer.

But the Princess, on the contrary, looked remarkably well, and was creeping and laughing to herself and having the very best of times.

"Perhaps she is preparing for her first attempt to fly." At this idea the nurse summoned the King and Queen, and in a few minutes the whole court stood around the creeping baby.

After this a special place was given to the Princess to creep in at her pleasure. There she tumbled and rolled and sang to her heart's content. When at last she was discovered standing alone, and then walking by having some support, the fairies felt somewhat encouraged about teaching her to fly.

In spite of trying to keep it quiet it was soon known abroad that the Princess was very backward and different from other fairies, which fact troubled the Queen to such an extent that she grew frightfully thin and was forced to wear a high-necked dress.

CHAPTER II.

THE CHRISTENING.

In Fairyland it is the rule for a baby fairy to fly to its christening. In the case of the baby Princess the ceremony had to be postponed from time to time until the fairies quite despaired of her ever being able to conform to the law, and begged the King and Queen to have her *carried*, thus settling the matter at once.

"The idea of a fairy without a name at the age of four months!" they said.

The royal pair thought long and earnestly upon the subject and finally accepted the suggestion, for how could the baby fly unless her wings were grown? Then again, if the law were enforced it

looked as if the Princess could never be christened.

It was decided that the law be repealed and the Princess carried to the services.

Invitations were hastily given out and preparations were made on the most elaborate scale. During the hubbub and excitement that attends such affairs the most important "person" crept about in her unconcerned way, oblivious of everything going on, and talking to herself in a language untranslatable.

What a dainty, pretty service the christening proved to be! It was held in a most beautiful dell, full of meadow flowers and ferns, that were deeply embedded in the softest and greenest of moss.

On a dais of forget-me-nots sat the King and Queen, their eyes bent with pride upon their only daughter, sound asleep in the arms of her nurse.

The service went smoothly until Parson Snap-dragon held up the walnut of water.

"Fernitta," he said, and that was all, for a stray drop tickled her nose and woke the young lady with a start. She thrust out her fists, drew up her legs, puckered her face, opened her mouth, and emitted a scream of remarkable volume.

Every one stopped up their ears.

"What lung capacity!" one shouted to the distracted Queen.

"What promise of a lovely voice! She will sing with power," gasped another above the screams.

"Will she never stop crying?" exclaimed all the fairies to themselves in despair.

Was it not sad for the Princess to disgrace herself thus?

As persistently as she had slept she now kept up her crying, and the nurse

found it necessary to carry her off of the field of honor to a flower near by, and administer some ground checkerberry seeds, supposed to be very soothing. When she stopped, her pretty dress was drenched with tears. As for the volunteer nurses, two were so ill they could not witness the rest of the service.

Upon her return the tear-stained little Princess seemed very passive, probably more from being exhausted than from anything else. She submitted to being held in the arms of each godmother and behaved in a faultless way.

Now, these godmothers were twelve wonderfully beautiful as well as gifted fairies, and each one was expected to wish the baby Princess something lovely.

In fairy stories it is an unfortunate but established fact that one of the godmothers becomes angry and pronounces

some sad fate for the baby's future. This the King planned to omit, but, poor man, with all his care and painstaking he did the very thing he wished *not* to do.

Fairy Grumble-growl was invited last. This does not seem important, but it was —most terribly so—for this particular fairy was very sensitive.

Of course, in the natural order of things, some one had to receive the last invite; why not Fairy Grumble-growl as well as anybody else? But *she* did not think of this, and so, after eleven had held and kissed Princess Fernitta and wished a lovely wish, Fairy Grumble-growl flew into the group, grabbed the Princess with a spiteful shake, and sputtered out in a frightful manner,—

"The idea of inviting me last! My wish is that this precious child shall become a mortal. Beware of a certain birth-

day!" Then with a push she thrust the pretty baby into the nurse's arms and flew off, shaking her fist menacingly. A very disconcerted group watched her out of sight.

"How dare she?" said the King, charging up and down the dais, while the Queen fainted and fell forward onto a bottle containing some of the baby's tears, completely breaking it to atoms.

All was pandemonium!

Every one was speechless except the Princess, and she thought it all very funny. She began to laugh and crow, and did not seem to have minded Fairy Grumble-growl's wild actions in the least.

"From now on Fairy Grumble-growl is banished from Fairyland! The idea of her—the idea!" shouted the King incoherently, growing angrier every moment. "Lord Dragon-fly, go you quickly

and bring the Court Record and let me erase her despicable name! Hasten!" Meanwhile the King raised the Queen, rubbed her poor white hands, and fanned her vigorously with a willow-leaf.

"Well!" remarked Fairy Honeysuckle, "we cannot change or modify that infamous wish. In spite of our combined efforts nothing can be done to keep Princess Fernitta from being a mortal—not all the wishing-wands in Fairyland."

"I shall try every means to avert the calamity," said the King. "However, here is my faithful courier with the Court Record. Many thanks, Lord Dragon-fly! Fairy Grumble-growl shall not have her name with those of respectable fairies any longer;" and he tore her seal out of the oak-leaf scroll with its bark binding.

"Nothing was said about how long she

would remain a mortal," said Sir Beetle-wing.

"That's it; she was charmingly indefinite! Mind you, she did not say which birthday," piped a tiny peri.

"I think it is some satisfaction to know that she will not always remain a mortal. Nothing was said about her never returning, if you remember. So let's sing and be glad that we have her with us now—and will have in the end," one comforter said sweetly, thus reviving the fairies' spirits.

"Come, let us make merry and show the wicked Grumble-growl that we still have some life left," came from the background.

"First," interrupted the King, "let all present promise never to reveal to the Princess as she grows older the sad fate in store for her. Swear!"

"We swear!" they said, kneeling down in the thick moss.

After this the fairies flew away in groups singing,—

"Fernitta! Fernitta!
Our Princess and fairy,
She'll turn to a mortal
That's clumsy, not airy!
Oh, hasten the day
When again she's a fairy,
Happily, gracefully,
Her sceptre to carry!"

CHAPTER III.

OUTCOME OF FAIRY GRUMBLE-GROWL'S THREAT.

THE King and Queen were in constant fear of Fairy Grumble-growl's threat, and although she had warned them only of the Princess' birthdays, they had their little daughter accompanied by a guard of some kind every day.

The King spent all his spare time trying to plan a scheme to frustrate the plot of the wicked godmother. He finally hit upon the idea of having made, each year, a copper cylinder large enough to admit the Princess and nothing more.

"Just the very thing!" he shouted in glee. "If she is sealed in one of these every birthday, how *can* she grow into a

mortal? Just the very thing! Ha! ha! ha!" and he applauded this with a slap on the knee.

Immediately, the matter was brought before the court and a sharp discussion followed, but in the end every one present admitted it to be a capital idea.

The Brownies and the Gnomes both wanted to take the contract, as the King offered in payment a certain bit of ledge, rich in ores. Both bands were anxious to add to their treasure-heaps, and besides they each had always secretly coveted that one particular ledge.

Votes were cast to see which party should have the contract, and the Brownies were proclaimed the lucky ones. The Gnomes acted very huffily, and impolitely turned their backs on the King and his goodly retainers, vowing to pay the monarch back at the first chance.

As the Gnomes disappeared the red-coated Brownies shouldered their picks and shovels and went through a motion song:

"Oh, royal little fellows we!
Oh, jolly fellows, as you see!
We pound, we dig, we lift and forge
All metals nicely as can be.

"Our axes in this way we throw.
'Tis easy? Try it and you'll know.
Of cylinders we've made a few,
A copper one we'll give to you.

"Oh, jolly little Brownies we!
And very knavish, as you see!
Each one is as busy, as busy,
As a buzzing bumble-bee!

"Buzz! Buzz!"

With this they wheeled about and went off, each one hopping on his left foot.

Accordingly the Princess was measured from head to toe, the plans were drawn,

and soon the copper cylinder assumed a tangible shape.

The King was extremely jubilant over the state of affairs and seemed positively hilarious when the Brownies bore the first copper cylinder to him for inspection. It was the eighth of an inch in height, with peep-holes and air-holes, and a slide through which to push refreshments during the prisoner's confinement. Truly the cylinder was a most remarkable sight! There it stood in the hollow all in readiness.

Fairy Grumble-growl had certainly made it very troublesome by not telling the particular birthday of which to take warning. The King tried his best to compromise with her in some way, but she remained obdurate.

It does not seem strange to say that the Princess' birthdays were anything but

merry and full of rejoicing. It was hard to tell which dreaded them the most, the Princess or the Fairies. It was not so much the idea of being shut up that troubled the Princess, but because she could not find out *why* she was thus boxed up, and on one particular day.

"Why won't some other day do quite as well?" she would ask; and no one ever essayed an answer.

Thus every year the Princess christened a new cylinder, for meantime she was growing very quickly—that is, for a fairy, you understand. When four years old she averaged nearly three-eighths of an inch, and when ten years of age measured exactly three-quarters of an inch.

As she grew, so did the fairies' admiration increase. They worshipped the ground she walked upon. In fact, she could have been drawn in her tiny flower

coach by the fairies themselves had she so willed it.

Wee flowers and mosses were strewn in her path wherever she went. How dainty she looked bowing her head to all of the subjects, not one of whom could boast of such beautiful golden hair! No wonder the fairies loved the pretty creature.

But as time went on the Princess began to develop strange traits. For one thing she had a weakness for asking questions, and, as the fairies were an ignorant, pleasure-loving set, she was never satisfied with their answers, and was generally sent to the Court Philosopher. He was a funny fellow, with a beard that swept the ground, tripping him at every other step; and was supposed to be the "scholar" of Fairyland, though how much of a one remains for you to judge.

Fernitta pestered him with questions until his head was so muddled that he did not even know his name, and whenever he saw her coming he would hide in sheer terror.

"The idea of my knowing *why* or *how* the flowers grow!" he sputtered to her when cornered. "Of course I don't know."

"What *do* you know anyway?" was her saucy inquiry.

"Oh, go away!" he cried out testily, running off as fast as his long beard would permit him.

The little Princess declared that she saw no use whatever in having a Court Philosopher, and after awhile snubbed the poor fellow unmercifully.

In time it was thought best to educate the Princess, but the fairies found, to their dismay, that she cared nothing what-

ever for their accomplishments. She would not sing, she would not fly, and absolutely declined to stay up all night to revel. What could be done with such a fairy?

One day she came across Lord Nimble-foot swinging on a bramble.

"Good morning, fair Princess," he caroled out.

"Good morning, sir," she replied, climbing up a mullen stalk near by.

"Why don't you use your wings instead of climbing in that ungainly way?" said he. "It's ever so much easier to fly—so," describing a tiny circle in the air, "to say nothing of being more graceful;" and he sat on the bramble again. "Won't you just try it?" he asked.

"I rather guess not! Too much bother to flutter around," she replied, teetering up and down indifferently.

"You don't look very contented somehow," Lord Nimble-foot said after awhile.

"I'm bored to death, to tell the truth—and I've run away!"

Lord Nimble-foot drew nearer to invite her confidence.

"Run away! What's up now?" said he.

"Oh!" she sighed with a resigned look, "that horrid Fairy Tip-toe has been trying to make me jump around on first one foot and then the other! Tiresome! I can't do it! Besides, that old Fairy High-fly has been giving me an exhibition on the first rudiments of flying—" she paused.

"What else?" said her listener.

"Fairy Sing-C has just screeched herself hoarse showing me how to trill 'Happy little fairies we,' and has succeeded only in making me quite deaf!"

"You seem to have no difficulty in hearing *me!*" Lord Nimble-foot ventured to reply. Fernitta laughed mockingly.

"You're a shrewd one!" she retorted.

"You're not like most fairies, 'tis plainly to be seen," said her companion, with a wise look. "And from what I have heard, you closely resemble a curious race called mortals."

Fernitta became intensely interested in the topic and begged him to give a close description of that peculiar race.

"Some are as tall as that tree over there," he said, pointing to a small pine.

"How large they must be!" she exclaimed, in wonder.

After this the Princess asked so many questions that Lord Nimble-foot ran away in despair. Being thus deserted she clambered down and wandered aimlessly

among the grasses, thinking and puzzling over what she had just been told.

"I should like to see a mortal!" she ejaculated, sitting on a tiny mushroom, and swinging her feet over the edge in a very unfairylike manner. Here she pondered until her attention was drawn by the flash of pickaxes and shovels held in the hands of some gnomes who were digging some distance away. As she slid off her seat she discovered some elves stealing eggs from a ground-swallow's nest.

"What do you do this for?" she asked of the merry band of robbers.

"These eggs are for the Princess Fernitta's birthday cake that we are to bake in the moonlight to-night," they replied.

"Much I shall enjoy the cake, shut up in a stuffy cylinder!" muttered the little lady, leaving the elves abruptly and passing on to the group of gnomes.

"What do you dig?" accosting them.

"Gold-root," the leader replied.

"What for?"

"It's part of our business to sell it," he retorted.

"Well, you are busy fellows, be it said to your credit, for as lazy people the fairies easily take the lead!"

"How can you say that when you are one of them?" the gnome exclaimed in surprise.

"A fairy I am at heart, but not a lazy one by nature."

Here the leader paused in his work, leaned on his shovel, and looked at her quizzically.

"You're Princess Fernitta, are you not, and to-morrow is your birthday? Am I not right?" he asked, for since the trouble over the contract for the copper cylinders these little miners had not at-

tended court and therefore had no acquaintance with her little Majesty.

"Yes, I suppose that's right," was her answer.

"Then you don't enjoy the prospect of entering the cylinder, I take it," the crafty gnome said.

"How *can* one, I should like to know? Birthdays are an awful bore. I cannot understand why the other fairies, too, do not spend their birthdays in copper cylinders."

"And you don't know why you are put in one?" asked the leader.

Princess Fernitta shook her head.

"That's what I have tried my best to find out!"

Here the leader winked at his companions, as much as to say, "Now is the time to get our revenge on the King!" What did it matter if they had vowed at

the christening never to tell the Princess of the fate in store for her? To their minds that was null and void.

"Well, I can tell you," he began, as his companions left their work and gathered around the two in a circle.

"When you were a baby a certain fairy got angry with your father and said in revenge that you would become a mortal on some future birthday; that's why you're put in the cylinder."

"Oh, I see!" she interrupted. "What fun! Why, I've just this moment been wishing to see a mortal, and now to think of *being* one! I'll not get into that cylinder again if I know myself. Thank you, sir;" and Princess Fernitta ran off, leaving the gnomes clucking to themselves over their revenge.

"If I go home, to-morrow will see me in that stupid cylinder! No, thanks! I

won't go home, and in that way I shall escape it." Thus the Princess argued as she tripped along under the leaves and ferns.

When night came on she crept into a buttercup and soon lay sound asleep.

Fairyland was the scene of great consternation when the Princess did not come home. The ten wasps who had been appointed her guard for the day confessed to have fallen asleep, and for punishment had their stingers cut off, which was the worst possible disgrace.

Expressly to please the Princess it had been planned to have the banquet that night earlier than usual.

The fairies sat down when the feast was spread, and waited and waited, but the Princess did not come, and so many had lost their appetites that the banquet was a dismal failure. The King and Queen

had no heart for the revels, and retired from the scene.

"To-morrow is her birthday, my lord," sobbed the poor frantic Queen, "and if we don't find her she will be at the mercy of the wicked Grumble-growl! Oh, dear! perhaps to-morrow is *the* day, you know; and Fernitta won't be in the cylinder." This was followed by a burst of tears.

Incoherent as this was, the King gathered its meaning and hastily went back to send out searching parties, leading the largest division himself.

The Princess was not to be found, high nor low, and the troops were called together and led sorrowfully home. Nothing was seen of her Highness upon her birthday, and the Queen gave up in despair. Not so the King, however; he still diligently kept up the hunt. But he was forced to agree with his wife when

he and Sir Puck came upon the footsteps leading to the buttercup and recognized them as those of the Princess, for on the other side footsteps were found to lead away from the flower, and these, when followed up, kept increasing in size to such immense proportions that further search was abandoned, as nothing could prove more positively that the Princess had turned into a mortal.

CHAPTER IV.

AFFAIRS AT THE CASTLE.

AFTER the disappearance of the Princess her birthdays were set apart as days of mourning. There was absolute quiet, no midnight revels were permitted, and all signs of gaiety were prohibited. Everyone was compelled to wear a bit of black pansy, their symbol of mourning, and cautioned not to smile.

Fairyland presented a woful sight on such occasions; indeed, so many tears were shed that a dense fog always covered the meadow.

Every spear of grass, every mushroom, every flower sheltered a disconsolate fairy.

What a strange sight the whole band

must have presented, with their hands folded, wings drooping, and faces wet with tears! Poor little creatures! They could not sing, nor dance, nor even smile, and so had to amuse themselves by weeping, which they did with a vengeance.

Since the fatal birthday the King and Queen had lived in the closest confinement. Their home was a wild rose, protected by a surrounding moat, over which lay a drawbridge of vines.

This wild-rose castle was very gorgeously furnished, and was truly a most fitting abode for the royal couple. Think of taking a nap between pink petals, of sitting on velvety stamens, and of breathing such a perfumed atmosphere all the year through! But the unhappy occupants little appreciated these luxuries.

Through nursing their one sorrow the King and Queen changed very much; he

became old and bent, and contracted dyspepsia of the worst type; the Queen owned two deep wrinkles on her little forehead. All this quite concerned the fairies, for they had never heard of two such cases before. Consequently, the castle was filled with some twelve magicians, who racked their learned (?) brains to make out a diagnosis of each case.

Why the King felt a pain after eating was a great puzzle, and the only way to cure this effectually, they assumed, was for his Majesty not to eat at all, which remedy the patient objected to strongly.

These magicians spent all day and all night poring over their dusty volumes of magic, trying every experiment known to their science.

Finally one dusty fellow emerged from a pile of scrolls and declared that he had found a remedy for the King's disease.

"It is a disease common among mortals. Therefore," he argued, "to find the medicine a mortal must be interviewed."

"Exactly so," murmured the other wise ones, bowing their heads, but rightly questioning as to whether their friend had discovered the *remedy* or the *means* to one.

Surely it was not a clever magician to thus divulge a discovery to his competitors! And what happened?

Each crafty magician secretly sent off a messenger to interview some mortal. Now, it happened that these messengers all set out at the same time, and also in the same direction, and they chanced to meet on the way.

There was a kelpie, a pixie, a dwarf, a hobgoblin, an elf, a pygmy, a brownie, a water-sprite, a nymph, a peri, a gnome, and a pigwidgin. Of course they were extremely sur-

prised to see one another, and when asked what he was travelling for, each remained silent.

When simultaneously an old woman was seen down the road, the messengers struggled into line. Now, strange to say, the old woman was nothing more or less than a witch, who knew the messengers all very well, and did not mind in the least to have them whisper in her ear. She must have been astonished to receive the same questions from all twelve. Perhaps she knew what was coming beforehand; in that case she was very wise not to give it away.

The messengers went off repeating her answer over and over to themselves. The twelve reached Fairyland at the same time and found the magicians together. The messengers marched on their toes toward the magicians, and the magicians likewise marched toward the messengers.

"What?" said the learned ones, with a frown.

"Diet!" shouted the messengers, bowing to the ground together.

Immediately each magician claimed to have been the discoverer of the remedy, and it was a long time before they were agreed to act together and decide upon the articles of food for diet. The result was that the King lived on poached hummingbirds' eggs, chickweed soup, and milkweed gruel. But the dyspepsia grew no better, and the King demanded a change.

Not knowing what else to do the magicians once more sent twelve messengers to interview a mortal. This time they went in diverse directions, and when they got back each one had a different remedy. Now, as the magicians would not agree on any *one* medicine, each dose was compounded, and the King took hot water

after every meal, Bismuth powders, Saleratus, Citrate of Magnesia, Belladonna, Bryonia, Calcarea, Chamomilla, Coffea, Colocynth, Pulsatilla, Hyoscyamus—and *then* the dyspepsia was no better.

In a terrible, horrible, raging temper he sent the magicians spinning like so many tops out of the castle.

The weary little Queen, too, had her trial, and every night submitted to the treatment of a dozen different fays, but in spite of their combined efforts the wrinkles stayed. When at last it was found that they were caused by worriment, the faithful fays set off to hunt a cure, and as they are persistent creatures, in all probability they are hunting yet.

At last the King forbade audience to everyone except Puck, and naturally life became very monotonous for those in the rose.

CHAPTER V.

NEWS FROM THE ABSENT PRINCESS.

It was the early morning of another anniversary day. A grasshopper alighted upon the drawbridge and knocked at the rose castle.

"Who's there?" roared the King, feeling a twinge of dyspepsia. "Haven't I forbidden anyone to bother me?"

The knocking continued.

"Go away this minute or I'll dump you into the moat," the King snapped out, testily enough.

Still the knocking continued.

His Majesty's ill humor was something terrific, and with a grunt he pushed aside the front petal and gave audience to the persistent intruder.

Without a word the grasshopper handed the dazed King a note. His Majesty was so surprised that he forgot to thank the messenger, and did not notice that he flew away.

"Whom can it be from?" exclaimed the King, fingering the mysterious letter. To tell the truth he had never seen a letter before in his life.

The first thing the King did was to summon the Court Philosopher, as he was the only one who could give information on difficult matters.

When the Philosopher came he took the note, opened it, and viewed the written contents. He was the only person in Fairyland that had ever learned the A. B. C., and as he had no practice he soon forgot the art of reading. In order to decipher the note he had to send for his primer, and the little errand fairy was not

slow in spreading the news, and when she went into the castle a multitude of fairies followed. It took the Philosopher so-o-o-o-o long to discover who had written the note that had it not been for their curiosity the fairies would have fallen asleep.

"F-e-r-n-i-t-ta!" he drawled out. "It is from the Princess!"

Everyone was alert at this and impatient for the rest. After some more spelling, which tried every fairy's patience, he read the note haltingly. Itran as follows:

"My dear Parents:

"Expect me home this evening on the Fast Express, if there is such. If not, I shall arrive in my own turnout about five o'clock.

"Your obedient daughter,

"PRINCESS FERNITTA."

"Fast Express! Her own turnout! What does all that mean?" exclaimed the muddled fairies. Poor ignorant little creatures! what did they know about "five o'clock," never having seen a watch? If the Princess had said, "Meet me at sunset," the fairies would have understood. However, it was enough to know that the Princess was to come that day.

My! what a hurry and scurry! What a change in the King and Queen. Dyspepsia and wrinkles disappeared instantaneously. The royal pair stripped off their mourning, and soon every fairy was busily making a new gown.

The rose castle was sprinkled and refreshed throughout, the spiders spun with all their might and main, the birds sang, the flowers took a beauty nap, and the crickets practiced all day long upon their instruments.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PRINCESS ARRIVES.

At dusk the fairies, dressed in the gowns made for the occasion, gathered together impatient to meet the Princess.

This is the way in which they marched:

Prime Minister Puck,
Marsh's Orchestra,
Royal Equipage,
Body-guards and Attendants,
Brownies,
Fairies,
Sprites,
Kelpies,
Kobolds,
Witches,
Goblins,

Pixies,
Elves,
Fays,
Field Orchestra.

Was this not a curious procession?

It was brilliant in the extreme. The pompous Prime Minister, or Sir Puck, led the way with all due ceremony, waving his bulrush in time with the music. He made a very good Drum Major indeed. Professor Cricket followed with his two score musicians, who played a melodious and measured strain. Then came the King and Queen riding in a walnut carriage drawn by eight of the choicest butterflies in the world. At the side ran twenty little fays, and immediately after marched the Regiment of Hornets and Bees. Then trooped the subjects, each fairy waving a wand tipped with a sparkling diamond, and each goblin having a

blazing ruby stuck in his cap. Each perfect gem sparkled and glittered in the rays of the setting sun—surely a novel torchlight procession! To let you guess how many gems there were let me say that a two-quart measure would about hold them.

Through the hollow, up a hummock, down again to a big gray stone they marched, here stopping to group around the King and Queen in a picturesque semicircle. They waited in feverish excitement.

"She did not say which way she was coming, but I trust it is here in Maple-leaf Lane," said the King in great agitation.

A curious sound brought all of them to their feet in alarm. Plunk! Plunk! Plunkity Plunk! ! !

The first impulse was to run away.

The fairies were about to do so when a vehicle the like of which they had never seen before drove into their very midst.

Behold the most stylish miniature private carriage of the Nineteenth Century —coachman, span, and all! The tiny bays pranced and pawed the ground impatiently. All of which frightened the fairies, who had expected to see their Princess flutter down the lane and join their circle a fairy in every sense. To them the horses were a species of butterfly without wings, and every time they neighed the fairies shivered and shrank back in fear, wondering how the Princess could have a taste for such ugly things.

Presently the door of the coupé was pushed open and two pretty faces appeared, and in a moment out stepped Princess Fernitta, followed by a natty maid, whom she addressed thus :

"Tressa, bring my parasol immediately; the sun is still hot at this hour. I don't know how this climate is for freckles."

The mesh of lace being produced, she held it jauntily over her head.

"How changed she is!" thought the fairies.

Her hair was coiled in a knot, and she wore a nobby little turban; she was dressed in a suit of navy-blue serge, and two patent-leather tips peeped from under the skirts, which were held up with one gloved hand. Altogether she looked as if she had stepped out of some fashion book.

She was a wonder to the little people, who could not conceive of a fairy without wings and a wand.

The band finally gathered courage to trip around the Princess and her train. The imps, pigwidgins, and fays trilled a pretty welcome song; the fairies waved

their wands ; and the brownies and gnomes beat time with pickaxe and shovel.

" Thus we nightly trip it lightly,
Ever sprightly,
On tiptoe or on wing fleeing,
With birds winging, posing, swinging,
Dancing, singing !
We are ever pleasures seeing.
Now you'll nightly, with us sprightly,
Ever lightly,
On tiptoe or on wing fleeing,
Feasting, singing, dancing, swinging,
With birds winging !
You with us these pleasures seeing !
Welcome ! Welcome ! Welcome ! Welcome !
Welcome ! Welcome !
Welcome to our Princess royal !
Thus we'll serve you, thus we'll love you,
Thus we'll call you,
Princess ! Ruler ! Fairy loyal !

As the fairies gained confidence the circle whirled the faster and the song grew the livelier, but the climax was very dif-

ferent from what the fairies had expected, for the horses, dazed at first with the blur and the noise, reared, snorted, and threatened to run away.

"Stop your senseless gabble," shrieked the Princess; "don't you see you frighten the horses?"

At this the disheartened circle shrank back, completely cowed. The Princess then rose to her full height, raised her lorgnette, and stared icily at the fairies.

"Ah!" exclaimed the little lady, with another glance at them. "What manner of greeting is this?"

The fairies looked dejected and shrank nearer together. The Princess continued scrutinizing the group, and when she discovered the Court Philosopher she drew the maid's attention to the old fellow's beard, at which both the ladies indulged in a quiet laugh.

"Well," Fernitta began, "what idiotic dressmakers they must employ! Perhaps, though, they have adopted the dress reform," turning to her maid.

"That's plausible," was the response from that trim little person, who then turned to inspect the baggage, which had been piled high upon a cart attached to the coupé.

"Bah! I should think you'd be cold here in this damp air. Don't you feel the need of an opera cloak? With your neck and arms bare, it is really dangerous;" and her Highness shrugged her shoulders.

On she talked in an unconscious way, showing that she had quite forgotten having spent a part of her childhood dressed in similar frocks.

"I suppose you don't have bon-ton hairdressers either, poor things, or you wouldn't let your hair hang. It looks schoolgirl-

like and silly. Tressa's awfully good at doing up hair, and I'll lend her to you sometime," said she magnanimously.

But Tressa heaved a sigh of despair at the immensity of such a task, for it included hundreds and hundreds of huge braids to be combed and twisted in a becoming way. The fairies did not appear overjoyed at the offer, looked dreadfully foolish, and tried their best to gather their fluffy locks behind them.

When Fernitta turned her glasses upon the royal pair in the dainty walnut car, she gave a tiny well-bred cry of delight. The happy parents flew to their long lost daughter and naturally, very naturally, hugged her.

"Oh! oh! don't; you'll tear my hair down!" met their ears and so stunned them that they fell into one another's arms. The Princess nervously smoothed

down the ruffled locks and offered her left cheek to be kissed. But the kissing was done with little enjoyment. Poor parents! Thoughtless Fernitta!

From a distance Sir Puck had watched matters in his quiet way, and now, with a most distracting twinkle in his eye, he walked up to greet the Princess. She raised her hand exactly parallel with her head, giving the pert little fellow the fashionable shake of the day. Sir Puck appeared to be immensely amused at this, and he disconcerted her Highness by thrusting his bulrush between her fingers and bursting into a hearty laugh. The Princess looked at him disapprovingly through her lorgnette, but Puck bore the scrutiny well.

"Sir!" said the indignant Princess.

"Sir Puck, at your service," laying his hands across his breast.

"Sir!" she gasped, enraged at his saucy attitude, for he had stuck his bulrush in the ground and leaned back against it, forming an acute angle; thus he eyed the Princess from head to foot.

"Humph!" he remarked at length. "Pray, what manner of greeting do *you* give *us?* What kind of dress is the gloomy one which you have plastered on? Why do you bundle your hair in such a ridiculous bob?"

Applause by the fairies.

"Tell me what that is perched on the top of your head?"

"Did you ever see such impudence? He's not safe to have in a civilized community. He needs a rigorous lesson in etiquette," said the Princess nervously to her maid.

"Please to tell me what that idiotic article is called perched upon your nose?

Why do you look through it so—o ?" he continued mockingly.

"Oh ! this is insufferable," exclaimed the Princess, not enjoying the manner in which the tables had been turned upon her.

"Tell me what sort of breed those butterflies are," pointing to the horses.

Here the Princess could not contain herself, and she made a dash at Sir Puck with the parasol. The cute little fellow narrowly escaped being caught in the lace flounces, and upon finding himself free went to gather his forces together for the home march, a plan the fairies hailed with relief.

Up the hummock, through the hollow, across the glen they flew along in line, with the coupé bringing up in the rear.

CHAPTER VII.

THE RECEPTION AND THE BANQUET.

It was quite dark when the procession reached the hollow, and gallant Sir Puck (with the Court Philosopher close upon his heels) assisted the Princess from her coupé.

"Ah!" ejaculated her Highness, surprised at this act of politeness from one seemingly so rude. "Thank you very much!" Then, seeing the philosopher, she said:

"There's that funny old man with the scroll! He looks as if he needed help."

So he did, poor fellow, but the Princess little knew that he was struggling to write down her different phrases, and she

brushed by him with a patronizing air, to look upon her surroundings.

"Where is the castle?" she demanded, with a sweeping glance through her lorgnette. "I see none; do you, Tressa?"

The maid shook her head.

"Is it possible you have not seen that wild rose on the prominence at the left?" Sir Puck exclaimed, as if he could not tolerate such lack of perception.

"That *rose!*" gasped Fernitta, expecting to see a mansion of stones. "What a plebeian idea! Where is the *porte-cochère?* And, pray, why are we left to walk through this boggy moss?" The Princess turned to enter her coupé again. "Drive me up to the door properly, Mike," said she.

"I'm afraid the horses won't go any farther, mum," the coachman replied; "they sink to their knees at every step, mum. The wheels—"

"Too bad! But I guess you will have to be content with present arrangements, your Highness," interrupted Sir Puck, suppressing his anger with difficulty. "Besides, we haven't any such new-fangled notion as a '*porte—porte*'—what did she call it?" turning to the Court Philosopher. "Come, old fellow, have you got it written down there?" pointing to his scroll.

"P-o-r-t-e-c-o-c-h-è-r-e," spelled the little fellow, laboriously.

"Is it worse for the horses to flounder around than for *me?*" cried the Princess. "I should like you to advance *your* views on the subject, Sir Puck! Why don't you have macadamized roads? B-r-r! it is v-e-r-y wet!!!!" grasping Sir Puck's arm convulsively. "Tressa, you get my rubbers. I never saw anything parallel to this. Oh! oh! oh! I beg of you to get

out of this place quickly. Oh! my skirts are draggled too."

"I can't myself see much advantage in wearing the long clumsy things," remarked Sir Puck as he offered her an arm.

Mike was directed to stable the horses in a hollow stump near by, and as he drove off, Sir Puck, with a lady on either arm, started toward the rose. They had gone but a few steps when the Princess threw her hands in the air.

"There's the baggage," she cried, despairingly. "To think that I should forget that of all things!"

"Quiet your fears, my lady; Mike has had orders concerning it," said the maid.

"I will see that all is safely taken to the castle," added Sir Puck, starting on again.

As the two stumbled along by his side the wicked little escort could not refrain from saying :

"You seem to be having a hard time. You see that wings are rather handy, after all, don't you?"

The maid groaned out a ready assent, but the Princess replied:

"That's a very ancient fashion—having wings. I had mine clipped. They spoil one's figure, you know."

Sir Puck was guilty of a smile, but gallantly helped them over the vine drawbridge and led them into the rose, where the fairies were congregated. Everyone kept a respectful distance from the two disgusted travellers.

"You must be hungry," said the Queen sweetly. "The feast is all in readiness. We'll proceed to the banquet hall," waving her wand for the fairies to obey.

"What!" interrupted the Princess. "How untimely! Not in my travelling dress, mother! *This* is beyond endur-

ance;" and she fell back in Sir Puck's arms.

The King, in great agitation, wiped the perspiration off his face with a white violet leaf; and the Queen too appeared quite nervous.

"Her Highness wishes to be taken to her room," said the maid, with a low bow to the Queen, who graciously directed them to go behind a petal at the left.

Fernitta recovered so as to retire without aid.

"Order my trunks immediately," was her parting injunction to Sir Puck as she lifted one corner of the petal and disappeared from sight.

Puck immediately obeyed this order, and in consequence a procession presently neared the rose. Sir Puck headed the line, with his arms loaded down with wraps and a bundle of parasols and umbrellas; follow-

ing came a band of pixies carrying twelve saratogas, as many bandboxes, two grips, and an extension satchel. As there was not room for all of this baggage it was piled outside the rose, on the drawbridge.

The maid had a serious time finding the trunk containing the right toilet. It was finally produced, and while the Princess was donning it, the fairies clustered around the pile of trunks and so forth, casting wondering glances at the curious things.

With a swish of silk and a gleam of jewels Fernitta burst in upon the assembly. She looked very stylish in a Worth gown of yellow crêpe de Chine, with kid slippers and gloves to match, and a charming bit of opera cloak hung over her arm. Her hair was done in a beautiful coiffure. She waved a gauze fan to and fro, quite the envy of the bespangled fairies.

The Princess returned their stare with perfect composure, and nonchalantly accepted the arm of Sir Puck, who offered to show her the castle. They promenaded between the petals and talked, but in a very disconnected way, as the Princess proved to be erratic.

"What do the fairies carry those silly little sticks for? What a pity their diamond tips are not set in rings, ornaments, or pins!" said she.

"Have you forgotten that you spent a portion of your childhood in Fairyland, your Highness?" replied Sir Puck.

"I have a dim remembrance of such," was her reply.

"Your memory must be very defective if you do not know a wishing-wand."

"Oh! wishing-wands, are they? They are convenient, too, I now recall, and I must have one right away, only—I should

never carry mine that way; I should slip mine in a pocket—that is, if it did not spoil the hang of my skirt." She laughed softly to herself. "They're silly-looking things, now, aren't they?" and she tossed back her head.

Puck was silent.

"Could you lend me yours for a minute?" she added a moment later; "I have thought of a capital joke;" and she gave Puck a winning smile that served to bewilder him.

He handed his wand over, and regretted it immediately, for what did the Princess do but wave the wand, and, lo! every fairy's dainty suit was changed to an evening dress or dress suit.

So, this was her joke! The Princess alone appreciated it, and fairly shrieked with laughter. Imagine the fright that it gave the fairies! The gentlemen did

not know how to act with trousers on, and looked like choked chickens with the stiff stand-up collars. The ladies tried their best to run away, and got all tangled in their skirts and trains. But when they found that no harm was meant they decided to stay, partly because they would lose the banquet if they went.

My! such a time as the fairies had managing the fans! And the gallants made particularly awkward work with them. For fear the Psyche knot would tumble down, every lady held her head as if she had a stiff neck.

The King and Queen were superb in royal purple and ermine. Altogether the Princess had a modern company of miniature mortals, except for the tiny wings; but, much to the Princess' despair, these remained.

"You remind me of a brood of spring

chickens," was her remark when she found that nothing could induce the little people to have them clipped.

"Let us now proceed to the spread," said the King, offering his arm to his daughter.

Sir Puck escorted the Queen, but quite lost his temper as he kept tripping up on the Princess' train.

"It seems to me that it would be a good idea to clip that arrangement" (meaning the train) "as effectually as you did your wings," said he, a satirical remark which the Princess ignored.

The banquet was spread in the middle of the rose, and the fairies were seated on the stamen stools. The Princess found her seat rather uncertain, and she was quite concerned for fear the powder that came off of the top of it would stain her dress.

This is the list of dainties the menu afforded :

Canned Acorn Meat,
Fricasseed Grasshopper,
Pollen Pudding,
Candied Cresses,
Salted Rose Seeds,
Green Cheeses,
Pickled Sourcrout,
Honeysuckle.

This was surely varied enough for the most exacting epicure, but Fernitta tossed up her nose.

" One would as soon eat caterpillar soup or mosquito pie! What wouldn't I give for some good beefsteak and mashed potatoes? " said she, holding a lace handkerchief up to stifle a yawn.

However, to the Princess' credit be it said, during the courses she talked to her nearest neighbors, though how much they

enjoyed her conversation remains a subject for conjecture. She asked their views on Shakespeare and all the latest works in fiction. She asked if they had travelled extensively—where—and which country they preferred. Did they like Italy and Switzerland? What college did they attend? Did So-and-so study vocal or instrumental music? And which did Miss Such-a-one like best, banjo or guitar?

As soon as the feast was over and the fairies began to wander between the petals once more, the Princess made known her intention to retire.

"What! not going now just when the fun begins! We dance until sunrise," said the King.

Dance after two o'clock! No, the Princess said she would not commit such a breach of etiquette. And, with another sleepy yawn behind the lace handkerchief,

she went off with Sir Puck's wand under her arm, for the little fellow had forgotten to take it back.

"There's no use, I cannot sleep on rose leaves," echoed through the petals to the congregation of fairies. "I suppose a spring bed is unknown here. Dear me! I am sure to have malaria if I sleep between these damp petals. Tressa, what *shall* I do?"

Here the fairies began their revels to drown all further remarks.

Meantime their merrymaking served to cover the hasty departure from the castle of the Princess and her maid. The quickness with which it was made was due entirely to the wishing-wand. When Fernitta crept stealthily over the vine drawbridge and into the night, not a bandbox or trunk could be seen outside the castle.

CHAPTER VIII.

TRANSFORMATIONS! PUCK INVESTIGATES.

EVERYONE knows Puck; he is the Court Jester in Fairyland. The pranks this imp does not think of are hardly worth the mention.

Never had Puck been baffled, disconcerted, or confounded until he met the Princess. He had never felt constrained with anyone before, and as he looked back he wondered how he possibly could have found courage to address the Princess as he did upon her arrival. Puck was never embarrassed in the company of his other lady fairy friends. But, alas for his peace of mind! he had met someone who did

not bow the knee to his superiority, and he hardly knew whether to enjoy it or not. Princess Fernitta was a revelation. Her conduct upset Puck's nerves to such an extent that he was very glad when the last dance was over and he had done his duty by escorting Fairy Silkenfloss home to her flower.

He himself turned into a wild morning-glory for a nap—to doze as he supposed until another banquet. But something prevented this pleasure-loving Puck from going to sleep. This was a strange symptom. He took a poppy-seed powder, but even then he could not sleep. The result was that his mischievous pate popped out of the flower before the sun had peeped over the edge of the earth.

Puck wagged his head from one side to the other, pricked up his ears, opened his mouth, and gave vent to a "Ho! ho!"

of amazement, for what did he see down in the hollow but a complete little city with houses, paved streets, a church, electric lights, and a huge marble structure easily recognized as a castle?

This gave him a slight shock, but what startled him more was the discovery of a tiny Queen Anne cottage just at the right of his own flower.

"I must look around," said he brushing himself down and looking for his wand, a thing he never travelled without. He shook himself, he peeped under every petal, and was very angry when he recalled lending it to the Princess. She had evidently put it to the test again.

"Well," said he, "I'm going to investigate things;" and he wasn't long taking his rose-water shower-bath and otherwise perfecting his toilet.

He clambered down the stem of the

flower to the ground. He gave a mighty yawn, stretched, turned a few somersaults so as to be surely awake, and then timidly approached the neighboring cottage. First he walked all around the house, coming nearer by degrees, and treading softly lest he should make a noise on the gravel walks. Sometimes he used his wings.

He peered through a barn window and saw the "butterflies" in the stalls; through another window he viewed Mike asleep on a low cot.

From here Puck reconnoitered around the cottage, seeing enough through the windows to wish he were inside. When he came to the veranda and saw the front door he resolved to get in at some rate. The resolute little fellow stalked up to the huge oak door, fumbled around awhile, and at last threw himself with his whole

strength against it. It flew back, sending Sir Puck sprawling into the reception hall over Persian rugs, and landing him in a ruffled heap by the hat-rack. Bewildered little fellow, he sat on the floor trying to gather his scattered wits together. The polished floor was so slippery that he had a serious time getting onto his feet.

Spying some of the Princess' Parisian creations hanging on the knobs above his head, and recognizing among them the turban worn the day before, Puck chuckled to himself gleefully upon finding her retreat so soon.

As he became used to his surroundings he grew bolder, and even went so far as to try on some of the hats; then he put on the sealskin cloak and danced up and down before the large mirror at the end of the hall.

He also found that lorgnette resting on

the hall table, and practiced using it a-while.

Then he wandered into the pretty parlor, sat in every chair, and nearly tipped over in a willow rocker. He handled the bric-a-brac and felt of the curtains and draperies. He found a marble statue of Mercury, and was hurt to think it wouldn't talk.

He sat on the sofa covered with pillows, and before long was fast asleep in their midst. Poor fellow! he had not slept a wink since the night's revels, and no doubt the pillows seemed very soft to his tired body.

CHAPTER IX.

THE PRINCESS AND SIR PUCK TAKE A RIDE. THE FIRST ATTEMPT TO MODERNIZE FAIRYLAND.

WHAT was that? An onyx clock striking seven. When Sir Puck, thus aroused from his morning nap, opened his eyes he could not for the moment recall where he was.

Meanwhile, a peculiar but most appetizing smell drew his attention. Besides this there was a distracting bustle and noise all over the house, and a certain clinking in the adjoining room.

A step on the hall stairs reminded Puck that he did not belong in the house. Escape was out of the question, as the next moment in swept the Princess with

her usual hauteur. She wore a becoming morning gown trimmed with a profusion of lace and ribbon.

"Tressa!" she called, sharply; whereupon a door was pushed back, and the maid appeared, wearing a spotless white apron and cap.

"Marm!" said she.

"I found the front door ajar; don't let that happen again;" and the Princess sat down in a roomy rocker. "Please to start a wood fire here; it is decidedly chilly."

The maid disappeared.

Sir Puck did not enjoy the situation. Why did not the Princess go out of the room and give him a chance to run off? He dare not move, so watched the maid start the cosy fire and saw the Princess draw near to the blaze, placing her tiny slippers on the fender.

It was a stifled sneeze that gave Sir Puck away, and he shivered from head to foot when the Princess jumped and gave a shrill "Oh!" After the little lady had regained her self-possession she said:

"You here? I was not aware I had a caller. Did not Tressa take your card? She is acting strangely for her, I must own. I shall have a talk and speak plainly with her. Dear me! what a bother these servants are! How *do* you settle the question here in Fairyland? But you look pale," she said with concern; "are you cold?"

Puck shook his head.

"But I'm sure you are. Come here by the fire," drawing a chair near hers.

Though Puck rather liked that prospect, he felt so embarrassed that he could not explain how he came, which perhaps was a happy omission. He did not sit at

ease in the chair, but that did not matter. He had heard his cousin Robin Good Fellow tell many an experience, but Puck was sure that this famous relative of his could not boast of such as *he* was then having.

For some reason Puck felt uncomfortable about his apparel, and made up his mind to apologize for not wearing the evening suit given him so unexpectedly at the banquet on the previous night, but the Princess kept chatting away and that delicious smell kept coming to his nose, and the two combined to chase every resolve out of his head.

"You will stay to breakfast," she said as the bell rang.

As he did not know what to say he remained.

When ushered into the dining-room Puck smoothed down his wings and began

to look interested. The glitter of the cut glass and polished silver served to bewilder him somewhat.

Presently he found himself sitting in a very high-backed something at the end of another very long something, with the Princess opposite.

The dishes were a puzzle to him; so were the knives, forks, and spoons, all of which he manipulated in an alarmingly curious way. He burned his tongue, spilled a spoonful of gravy, and dropped his fork a dozen times or so.

He laughed at the yellow puffy muffins, and thought the steak and potatoes 'most as good as grasshopper fricasseed. He fairly gorged himself with these dainties, and reluctantly followed his hostess back to the parlor.

"It is now eight o'clock, and I take my morning ride at this time. I should be

pleased to have you accompany me, as I am going to inspect the city. Which do you prefer, my surrey, trap, or coupé?"

He said the surrey would suit him, although he didn't know what either of the three was like.

Here the Princess excused herself, coming back shortly, dressed in a walking-suit; a leghorn hat trimmed with violets was perched on her head. Under her arm she had Sir Puck's wishing-wand, which she appeared to be very careful of.

When Puck actually sat in the surrey beside the Princess, in front of the very umbrella that had been thrust at him upon her arrival, he felt as if he were dreaming.

He found the carriage very comfortable, and soon began to fancy the span of prancing bays, and only wished he were in Mike's place.

They sped along under tufts of grass

that to them were the same as big trees. They rode by the clumps of flowers, and soon entered the modern city in the hollow. Over the smooth streets they rolled, getting out of the carriage at times to inspect the different buildings. Not a person to be seen anywhere, not a house occupied, not a proprietor in the shops; in fact the Princess and Sir Puck had full possession of the little metropolis.

They visited the church, and while the Princess played on the large organ Sir Puck scampered here and there among the pews, opening hymn-books and actually trying to sing Old Hundred with her Highness.

The Public Library was examined, and although the books were a great wonder to Sir Puck, he enjoyed the Reading-room best; and among the periodicals he liked most of all the one which bore

a likeness of himself and had his name emblazoned on the cover.

They drove to the castle, and went from top to bottom of the large building. Sir Puck was enthusiastic over the stables, which held any number of beautiful shiny horses. He mounted one and rode around the castle bareback in spite of the Princess' suggestion to use a saddle.

As he dismounted, he said:

"Well, they're 'most as good as grasshoppers," which was a great deal for Puck to say.

Next the two took a row on the artificial lake. Puck thought the oars were comical things and easy to handle, but after he had lost them in the water three or four times he came to the conclusion that it was easier to scull along with a reed on a leaf, and he seemed much relieved when the Princess took the seat and rowed back.

"Where are the fairies?" exclaimed the Princess, as she stepped from the boat.

"Asleep," said Puck examining a settee near by.

"What time do they get up?" looking at her little Swiss watch.

"Get up?" he rejoined; "don't get up at all during the day, of course! I couldn't sleep is the reason I'M here."

"When do you have time to work?"

"WORK!" he shouted, in derision. "Never a bit of that!"

"Atrocious!" she cried; "lazy, good-for-nothing creat—" and here she flounced into her carriage.

Puck jumped in after her, trembling to see what her angry Highness would see fit to do next.

"Tell me where the fairies sleep," was all she demanded of him.

When the carriage was driven among

the anemones where the fairies lay sweetly dreaming, no one can picture the Princess' rage as she discovered their dress suits and evening gowns hanging on the spears of grass and swinging and flapping in the breeze. Why ! it really looked like wash-day.

Now, Puck saw her disgust and felt a terrible twinge of remorse as he saw his own natty black broadcloth hanging with the rest of the suits. The Princess was so engrossed, however, that she did not notice that Puck jumped out of the carriage, grabbed his suit from the line, and disappeared into the wild morning-glory which he had tenanted that very night. When he came back his coat was on back part foremost, and as he walked the coat-tails dangled in front inconveniently. Poor fellow ! he looked hot and uncomfortable.

The Princess was so preoccupied that she did not notice Puck's transformation, but walked from one flower to another wishing that she had the courage to poke each sleeper out of bed.

"Just think, the creases will be out of their trousers!" she said angrily. "They shall not sleep another wink. In the daytime, too!" and quick as a flash she twirled Puck's wishing-wand, and an alarm clock stood at the base of every flower.

B-r-r-r!!! W-hir-r-!!! went the clocks at a deafening rate.

Immediately every fairy thrust aside a petal portière, rubbed two sleepy eyes, yawned, and then seemed quite paralyzed with fright. Before the Princess could give them a scolding the fairies spread their tiny wings and fluttered away, leaving nothing behind but the evening suits.

Puck remained, however, but he was so overcome by the succession of surprises that he had to lean against a weed for a moment to recover himself.

Princess Fernitta pulled out her handkerchief and began to cry.

"O dear!" with a sob, "I thought it would be so—o easy to reform or modernize Fairyland, but—" here she turned pale. "Where are my smelling salts? Quick!!!" And she fainted dead away in the arms of Sir Puck, who had jumped forward just in time to catch her.

CHAPTER X.

THE KING AND PRINCESS FERNITTA COME TO AN UNDERSTANDING.

It always took the King and Queen longer than anyone else to dress, and both disliked being awakened in the daytime, but they could not very well help hearing the alarm clock go off under their flower. At first the King absolutely declined to get up and see what the matter was, and the little Queen was the one to peer without.

When she saw Fernitta lying prostrate in the arms of Sir Puck, the royal mother hysterically begged the sleepy King to get up.

"What's up now?" growled his Majesty, bouncing out of bed in anything but a happy manner.

"It's Fernitta! Hurry!" she cried, helping him as much as possible.

"Fernitta is it? I'm not surprised! Something *modern*, as usual, I suppose," he grumbled, taking his time.

"Oh, hurry up!" she cried, wringing her hands in despair.

"The idea of getting me up at this time of the day! I wish Fernitta hadn't come back! Do *there!*

"Oh!" screamed the Queen, quite distracted.

"Where's that wishing-wand? I'll just send her back."

"What are you thinking of, my love? Are you crazy?"

"No, I'm not. In fact, I was never more in my right mind, and I intend to

make our incorrigible daughter understand that I am *ruler* here!"

The poor little Queen held her breath with fear. The two finally reached the Princess and Sir Puck, and after several acornsful of water had been thrown into Fernitta's face she opened her eyes.

"Anything I can do for you, my dear?" asked her mother. "Won't you be carried to our flower? It will rock you to sleep."

"And make me deathly seasick—no, thanks!" was the answer.

The Princess sent Mike for some pillows, and when they were delivered the little lady bolstered herself with them against a weed. She kept smelling some Lavender Salts that the thoughtful Tressa had sent along.

"Fernitta, what do you mean by upsetting affairs? Where are my subjects?

And, pray, what do you mean by waking everyone up?"

"I will go away again," she said, taking a very big sniff of the salts; "I'm sure I don't know where the absurd little creatures chased themselves to."

"Fernitta!" roared the King; and she raised her head in surprise, for a reproof from her indulgent father was something novel.

"I've commenced to modernize Fairyland," she declared.

"Wh-a-t?" cried the Queen, throwing her hands in the air. "I think it does very well as it is. Don't you?" turning to her husband.

"Oh, I don't know anything beside such a prodigy of a daughter," exclaimed the King sarcastically.

"How do you like the looks of the Capital of Fairyland?" asked Fernitta, pointing to the city in the hollow.

"Capital what?" said the royal couple, looking on the pretty settlement in undisguised amazement.

"Capital WHAT!" said the Princess, waving her arms in despair. "Haven't you studied civil government?"

"No," said the King.

"And you a ruler of an empire! How do you manage, pray?"

"Oh, I got along pretty well when you were absent, and still think I'm capable of doing so," looking at his worried wife.

"What ignorance!" Fernitta said indiscreetly, bringing matters to a terrible crisis, for the King, stung by the sarcasm, had raised his wand over Fernitta, and the Queen clung to his arm imploring him to think of what he was about to do when—the Court Philosopher put in an appearance.

He stumbled up to the Princess with a

profound bow, and asking her to enlighten him on certain things, produced a scroll of prodigious size and began to read off the exact words and slang phrases the Princess had used since her arrival. This struck the rest of the party as a great joke on the Princess, and they all covered their faces for fear of offending her with their laughter. The Princess, however, saw the fun too, and politely gave a definition for everything.

"You're a Court Philosopher, and you haven't studied the etymology of words! That is bad," she exclaimed at the finish.

He looked up in amazement.

"Have you studied rhetoric?"

His mouth dropped open.

"Logic, natural philosophy, psychology," she continued, "and all the higher sciences?"

The little old fellow looked so very

blank that the Princess had to dismiss him lest she laugh right in his face.

When he retired everyone felt constrained and awkward, for they had nothing to do but pick up the previous talk where it had left off. It was lucky that the interruption came as it did, for in another moment the King would have uttered his terrible wish and Fernitta would have become a mortal for all time.

It was the King who broke the silence.

"I will abdicate the throne in your favor," said he.

"No such thing!" Fernitta cried, feeling for the first time a pang of remorse.

"I recognize my unfitness for the position now"—

"Oh, no! no! no!" interrupted Fernitta, throwing the pillows right and left, and running to her father's side. "You

shan't say any such thing. I would not have you do such a thing for the world. I don't want to be ruler. Indeed I do not. I was thinking of a few reforms—a few changes for the better, you know;" and she planted a big kiss on the cheek of her august parent, and gave him a hug that fairly took his breath away.

Fernitta had completely won her father's heart, and all his possessions were hers to do with as she willed.

"Do anything you want to, my daughter," he said. "My subjects will obey you."

"How can they if I have frightened them away?"

For answer the King blew on a tiny silver horn, and immediately the air was full of fairies. They looked disgusted, and probably were so at being waked up a second time that morning; and when

they saw the Princess everyone held back and bowed the knee very reluctantly.

"You are to obey my daughter's call henceforth," the King announced; and when the signal was given the sorry-faced band gladly hastened away.

"You are an old dear," Fernitta cried ecstatically, with an affectionate pat on the arm. "It is now dinner time; don't you hear the town clock striking twelve?"

They all listened attentively to the clear tones.

"Won't you come and dine with me?" she asked the King and Queen, overlooking Sir Puck, who had begun to dream of more muffins.

"Eat!" exclaimed the King. "I'm going back to bed!"

"Well, some other time then," laughed Fernitta, as she jumped into her carriage. "I will send my trap around for you to

night, and Mike will show you the city."

Here the horses started off with a bound, and away went the Princess, waving her hand to the staring trio.

The King and Queen hastily went back to resume their nap. As for Puck, he stood in the midst of the sofa pillows, which no one had thought to put in the carriage.

Poking around he found the Lavender Salts and also—oh, joy!—his wishing-wand.

Puck picked up the pillows, arranged them under a shady fern, and lying down soon fell fast asleep.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PRINCESS MAKES NEW LAWS.

THE next morning the first thing the Princess did was to make out her "Rules," or "Code of Laws." Instead of delivering them herself she entrusted the duty to Sir Puck, who promised to read them to the fairies at the most convenient time. Accordingly he set off to hunt up the migrated community. He found the fairies in an adjoining glen, feasting as usual, and a good deal of pounding on a hollow gourd was needed to draw them to order before he began to deliver his little "talk," from a pulpit loaned by a certain Rev. Mr. Jack.

Sir Puck caused quite a sensation as he

mounted the platform, for he was clad in his black broadcloth. From the shiny front to the patent leathers he was immaculate. As he took a hem-stitched handkerchief out of his coat-tail pocket a murmur passed along the rows of fairies. He cleared his throat with a nervous cough, and then the tiny lecturer began :

"Fellow fairies!—" another cough—"I think you would enjoy being modern. You see that I have adopted the idea. This"—pointing to his person—"is a modern suit. It's pretty convenient, because there are a great many of these kind of things called pockets;" and he turned them all inside out for inspection.

"These are trousers—this is a cravat—this the shirt—this the vest—this the coat—this a hat—and, lastly, here is a cane!" As Puck produced the last

article, his whole audience burst into a roar of laughter.

"For economy's sake one might substitute this wishing-wand for the cane," someone from the back row shouted.

"Now, I confess that I am beginning to like this outfit," Puck continued, ignoring the remark and strutting down the stage with an indifferent air. "You gents are to wear everyday suits somewhat similar to the one I have on. As for the ladies, the Princess wishes me to inform them that she is soon to give a talk in City Hall on Dress Reform. This will be expressly for their benefit. You are to live in curious things called houses, that are full of what are called rooms, which remind me very much of—pockets, only that the rooms are connected by doors. There are to be what the Princess terms 'modern improvements,' and I

can tell you these are all awfully funny things.

"In what is called the kitchen there is a place where you can get hot and cold water at the same time. Then there are groups of bubbles in the middle of the rooms, which light up when you turn a comical knob and look as bright as ten fireflies in one—I've forgotten what they are called.

"You are to sleep during the night, and, getting up with the sun, are to work during the day. The ladies are to learn to sew and cook, and I can tell you"—here he assumed a confidential attitude—"the sooner they learn to make what the Princess calls muffins the better." And he smacked his lips, unconscious of the groans and yawns on the part of the ladies.

Puck then held up his fingers and began to recite:

"Monday, wash; Tuesday, iron; Wednesday, mend; Thursday, make calls; Friday, sweep; Saturday, cook; and Sunday, rest!"

"And not one day for fun?" one lady said.

"Let's have every day Sunday," they all shouted.

"I have one objection to the order of exercises," said one independent lady, "and that is, if everybody calls on Thursday, everybody will be out."

"Well, you'll have to settle such questions yourselves," said the lecturer, uneasily.

"What do the gentlemen have to do?" one sprightly miss inquired.

In reply Puck explained what a "trade" consisted of, to the evident disgust of the masculine portion of his audience. "I am going to study law in order to assist

in managing city affairs. Henceforth I shall be Lawyer Puck, Esq. You will have your choice of trades. And now I guess I have told everything as instructed. Good luck to you all!" With which Lawyer Puck bows down and out of the pulpit.

As soon as he stood in the midst of the fairies, so many questions were asked him that the poor little fellow went nearly distracted, and almost forgot to distribute the invitations to the reception to be given that evening by the Princess in City Hall. Each recipient fingered and examined the envelope with a face full of curiosity mingled with a sort of fear. The invitations were compared, and after a great deal of whispering the band skipped to their respective flowers to get ready. A hack was found to await each

beflowered fairy as she stepped from her dainty house.

What surprise the fairies expressed as they rode under the electric lights over the smooth streets and straight to the long flight of marble steps! There they alighted and were conducted to a dressing room.

To the fairies it was a new Fairyland. How confused they were at the room full of potted plants, draperies, and festoons! How perplexed at the incandescent lights, and most of all at the orchestra of twelve pieces!

How entranced they became with the music, and how quickly they learned to keep step with it!

What a time they had testing the dainties served for refreshments! How they minced away at the bread sandwiches, olives, and candy wafers, and sipped at the coffee and sherbet!

When they bade the Princess good-night they truthfully said they had enjoyed themselves very much.

The hacks awaited them, but instead of taking each fairy back to her flower, everyone was carried to some little house in the city.

After the many surprises, the fairies slept as soundly in their tiny spring beds as in the daintiest of flowers.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PRINCESS' DUTIES AND DIFFICULTIES.

AFTER the reception Princess Fernitta's days were very much occupied.

She started A. B. C. classes, and found teaching "Here is a dog. Can a dog run?" a very dubious task.

She started a Singing School, and soon after formed a Choral Union. In music the fairies made the most progress, probably because they derived most enjoyment from it. The imps sang tenor, the brownies bass, the fairies soprano, and the elves alto. But in spite of the Princess' endeavors to cultivate a taste for classical productions the fairies still preferred their roundels to oratorio.

Every Sunday the Princess delivered a sermon, besides playing the organ and taking the position of Sunday-School Superintendent. Sunday evenings she gave "talks" on the topics of the day.

Weekdays saw her instructing the men in business. She rode out to the suburbs, and gave the fairy farmers ideas on the crops, helped them to fill barrels with the red apples that were no larger than our apple-seeds, and assisted them in gathering the vegetables, not one of which was as big as an orange seed.

She even went to see the gnomes and made them sign a treaty with her father, giving them in return some valuable suggestions for mining.

She instructed the butcher, the baker, the grocer, the merchant, and the tailor.

She organized classes to teach the ladies how to keep house; and her worst

trial began when she distributed the cook-books. The castle was filled from morning till night with fairies nursing their burnt fingers, and husbands sick with dyspepsia caused by testing the results of their wives' experiments. Why, the castle was a regular hospital.

The fairies' memories were found so defective that it was thought best to have a bulletin board upon which was printed the programme for the day. It was always surrounded.

It was also necessary to have alarm clocks in every house, and as the fairies could not remember to wind them, the electric-light man was hired to wind them on his daily round through the city.

One thing that Fernitta detested above all others was the silly fashion of naming every one of the fairies after some flower. Not a Jane or a Mary could be found

amongst them ; no such thing as a family name. As a result the Princess gave each subject a sensible name, with Brown, Smith, or Jones attached ; and for fear these names would skip their memory she had them embroidered on the dress or coat. In spite of this precaution, however, the old custom remained, and it was still Rosebud, Sweet-fern, Briar, and Silver-leaf.

Some serious trouble was also experienced through the wishing-wands. For instance, if a fairy objected to one of the Princess' plans (such as having an alarm clock in every house), up went the wand, and, *presto!* the objection was removed. Weary little reformer! Poor little Princess! Her life was anything but an idle one.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE PRINCESS GETS LOST.

DESPITE her modern views Fernitta had the desire to steal a ride upon the back of a grasshopper, as she had seen the daring little Puck do many times. He was now so busy studying law that he did not have time for such frolics, much less to offer to take the Princess with him. She once hinted very strongly, but he laughingly said:

"I fear, Miss Fernitta, you haven't the courage to take a trip by yourself."

This so piqued the little lady that she secretly vowed to prove it to the contrary.

She had a chance.

One morning, after dismissing her

patchwork class, she left the castle and started off down the street at a brisk rate. As she passed the Queen Anne cottage, which, by the way, had been offered for the services of the fairy L. A. W., Sir Puck rode up to the Club House on his safety, dismounted, and then tipped his cap deferentially. Just at that very moment as handsome and stout a grasshopper as one would wish to see came jumping along.

"Now is the time to show your pluck!" Sir Puck cried out.

On the spur of the moment Fernitta sprang upon the insect's back, startling the poor thing so that he gave one tremendously high spring, carrying his tiny passenger out of the sight of Fairyland.

"Oh!" shrieked the Princess, clinging on for dear life. "I do hope this bug won't take it into his head to do that again.

I don't like this a bit, and if it wasn't for that ridiculous Puck I wouldn't be here."

Her Pegasus was not at all solicitous of his rider's comfort, and continued his lively gallop. He joined a group of friends farther on and entered into their frolics with a vigor that made Fernitta cry for mercy. Still, although she was far from comfortable she found it novel and exciting.

All at once a noise was heard, the grass was crushed to the ground, and a yellow bill appeared, and, lo! with a snap Fernitta's steed disappeared, threatening to carry her along; but she objected to being treated as a tidbit and tumbled off in a hurry.

Happily for her the Princess fell on a plot of Running-Jenny. Finding no bones broken and that all she missed was a little breath, she looked around for some other

grasshopper to take her back. But every one had disappeared.

"How am I to get home?" she exclaimed.

There she was alone and lost—quite lost; what could she do? Running among the tall grasses was as much of a maze as a cornfield, besides being very tiresome. This way and that way she ran. In vain did she hunt for a trail. She became hot, tired, bedraggled, and disgusted.

As night came on she began to feel very much afraid.

Poor little Princess! she was terrified at the idea of being unprotected. Besides the intense darkness, a mist came up, gradually changing into a drizzly rain, completely drenching her through and through. The water dripped from the brim of her hat and trickled down her

cheeks, and her incessant mumblings were wishes for her mackintosh.

"If I had a wishing-wand I might get out of even this pickle. I can't carry one in my pocket, as I haven't one."

Presently she passed a belated ant hurrying home with its supper.

"Good Ant, please give me shelter for the night. I am the Princess Fernitta."

But as soon as the ant heard the name she hurried on saying, "I am a friend of the fairies and will not harbor one who ruthlessly breaks up their pretty frolics."

To the Princess this was a new version, and it troubled her.

A humming-bird next crossed the path, and Fernitta beseeched of her a night's lodging in her nest.

"I am a friend to the 'little people,'" the bird sang in a minor key. "I know who you are—the fairies' taskmistress.

My nest is surely not soft enough for one who spurns scented flower-petals. Use your wings and fly home."

"Alas! they are clipped," Fernitta cried in distress.

The bird flew away. In her despair the Princess accosted a bunch of Wild Columbines.

"Please, pretty flowers, won't one of you let me rest in your cup and eat of your honey, for I am hungry and weary?"

"We are friends of the fairies. Our petals are not as soft as you desire. Hie to your modern bed."

"But will you not give me some honey?" asked the little beggar; "I often eat it on my bread for lunch."

But they turned their faces away, and Fernitta had nothing to do but pass on.

"Why should the fairies dislike me?" she asked herself sorrowfully. "They

do not understand my intentions. What awful gossips they must be to spread my name around so quickly! I shall have to curl up by some stone, 'tis plain."

Just then she spied a modest violet, nun-like in a cloister of moss. This flower looked so sweet and loving that Fernitta finally gathered courage to knock for admittance.

"Dear Violet, take pity on a lost and frightened fairy—a misunderstood fairy —Fernitta!"

Almost before this was said the flower drew the tiny creature into her soft folds to soothe her to sleep.

When the flower opened to the morning sun Fernitta awoke, bathed her hot face in the mist, and after thanking the flower started for Fairyland, a wiser and more thoughtful fairy. She had learned a lesson—this impulsive reformer.

After much hunting she came upon her tiny city, and, boarding an electric car, soon entered the castle. She explained the cause of her absence and then hastened to her room to sit down at her secretary and write a note to the colony of flowers. This she sent by the artful arbitrator Puck.

"Dear Flowers:

"No doubt you miss the fairies as tenants, but when making my *Modern Fairyland*, I did not plan to rob you of them. Above all, I do not want to spoil their enjoyments, and I now see where I was too severe with them.

"My subjects shall be taught never to forget your kindnesses. Modern houses do not spring up everywhere like yourselves, and your petal-coverlids are a luxury not known in Queen Anne cottages.

"I pray you, if it be your lot, to shade our pretty city, but if not, ever act towards lost fairies after the manner of the violet.

"Accept my apologies and extend them to the insects and birds.

"Sincerely,

"PRINCESS FERNITTA."

To the Violet she wrote:

"Dear little Protectress:

"Some one has said the Rose is Queen, but this is a mistake, I ween, for royal purple do you wear, and heart-shaped is the leaf you bear. None is more the queen than thou. Such I proclaim you here and now. Wee missionary, to you I came. 'Heart's-ease' truly is your name.

"PRINCESS FERNITTA."

When the other flowers awoke and saw the violet clad in double robes of purple

(a deed of Puck's), they said in wonder, "Who has caused this?"

"It came through Princess Fernitta," answered Heart's-ease not at all boastfully. Then the flowers wished they had not been so inhospitable to the poor little Princess.

CHAPTER XIV.

AN OLD-FASHIONED BALL.

As time went on the fairies began to see that the Princess enjoyed a good time and a frolic as well as they. With a dogged pertinacity seldom excelled by mortal these fairies clung to their old customs, many times not changing when it would have been for their own good.

Through a very slow process of evolution these little people became used to the new life, and in some ways liked it. They soon saw how much more they enjoyed pleasure after a bit of work. Embroidery became a passion with the tiny housewives, and they vied with one another on the weekly mending and darning.

It was at a "luncheon" given by one Mrs. Trefoil that some one proposed giving a ball.

"Why not have it to-night?" some one else added.

"Not *to-night!*" said a few, in horror at the shortness of the time given to them to prepare for the affair.

"I haven't any gown *fit* to wear," one piped up.

"Mine's all out of style—especially the sleeves," said one with a crochet work-bag.

"Why not have an old-fashioned ball?" asked Mrs. Brown, *née* Fairy Clover.

"And look as much out of style as possible? I guess not!" exclaimed a group of stylish girls, who did not catch her meaning.

"But I mean to dress up in our old fairy outfits," corrected Mrs. Brown.

"Ah! that is very different," the ladies exclaimed, applauding the suggestion with a furious clapping of hands, the heartiest of all in approval being the Princess.

The guests chattered away until four o'clock and then ran home to prepare supper for the hard-working husbands, and to gossip with their neighbors about the coming dance.

The telephones kept up a continual buzz throughout the city.

The baby fairies were all undressed and tucked in their cribs, and then the mamma fairies unpacked all their old fineries, let down their long braids of hair, flew to the castle for a wand, and then to the spot chosen for the ball—a place where human foot had never trod.

There, uninterrupted, the insects sang at the tops of their voices; there the birds lived in harmony, without danger; and

there it was that the dainty little visions of fairies could dance without fear of being molested. They flitted around in their fluffy dresses, dancing in circles of twos and threes, and singing the old-time roundelay as they twirled on the tips of their toes.

"Tra la la la, tra la lee!
Happy little fairies we,
Dancing on the mossy green,
Not by spying mortal seen.
Happy, blithesome fairies we!
Tra la la la, tra la lee!"

The royal family came to the ball in the same old walnut car that had served them so well in the time of "ye olden" Fairyland. The same fairies, who had been attendant pages in times gone by, fell naturally enough in their old position by the car.

A more entrancing picture cannot be imagined.

Amidst all this array sat the Princess. She was dazzlingly beautiful; no dress could compare with hers. No one had such long golden hair, hanging like a silken cloak to the bottom of the fluffy skirts.

When she stepped from the car she waved her wand as if she had done so all her life, she trilled the merry songs, and tripped around in the circles of dancing fairies, balanced on spears of grass; then she flew as best she could with her clipped wings, and took refreshments just as if she liked them, eating off of leaves, and drinking out of nutshells.

She was resting on a checkerberry, fanning herself, when Lawyer Puck, in his old close-fitting suit of green, came up to her.

"This is 'most as beneficial as gymnastics, *n'est ce pas?*" puffed he, with a twinkle in his mischievous eye.

The Princess made room for him beside her, and, accepting her offer, he said:

"Now, own up," with a sly glance; "isn't this berry just as good as a 'conversation' chair?"

No reply.

"My dear Fernitta, now don't you really like this 'old-fashioned' way of doing things the best? See how free everyone is; then, too, after their night's fun there'll be no housework to think of, and the only thing to do will be to tumble into a desirable flower for the night, and—and you won't have a bed to make in the morning."

"Lazy fellow! Horrid Puck," said she, with a laugh, "was ever anyone equal to you? You surely have tact enough for a King; you ought to be a ruler; some one ought to adopt you. Prince Puck! How would that sound?"

"That's just what I aspire to be," said the

sly little fellow, for he was head over heels in love with the Princess, and had been ever since she thrust her parasol at him.

"Why don't you hunt up a Princess to suit your taste and settle the matter?" said she.

"I have, and have found her," with a despondent look.

"Who may she be?" with sudden interest.

"Well," deliberately crossing his legs, "she is a most incorrigible creature—beautiful, of course! Leave Puck to judge of such! But she is very indifferent! And—there is a more s-e-rious trouble, for, you see, I'm bound; I—"

"Faint of heart perhaps?" she interposed.

"NEVER! But, you see, a lady of rank in Fairyland is supposed to choose her consort. Therefore I have no liberty

to present my—I haven't a ghost of a chance," looking very dejected indeed.

"According to the modern way—the way mortals do—you are at least free to propose," said the Princess.

In a flash Lawyer Puck was bowed before her, with his hands across his breast.

"According to the modern privilege, will you be my wife?"

"What if I should uphold the old custom of choosing my own husband, and refuse you?"

The poor little lawyer looked nonplussed.

"Which do you like best, now, the old or the new?" she added mockingly.

The *new* forever!" he declared, jumping to his feet, for Fernitta agreed with his decision and uttered the three-lettered word, and sealed her vow in the usual way.

After this they sat nearer together than

before and whispered something very, very low, but shortly, with faces wreathed in smiles, they returned to the group of dancers.

Before the time for departure Fernitta mounted a toadstool. Bringing the fairies to order, she addressed them thus :

" My dear subjects, one and all !

" You and I have now lived for some time under the modern form of government. That the Capital of Fairyland has proved a success everyone will say."

A pause.

" To-night," she went on, " sees you as you used to live—free and without care." Turning to her astonished parents she said : " I lay down my sceptre thus, and bid you free to go back to the old life. You may choose without fear."

A murmur of excitement was heard. She went on :

"The other day some one made the remark that it was high time for the Princess to marry. Another one said it was better for the Princess to remain single, as nothing short of a *condensed* mortal would suit her fastidious Highness.

"I have chosen my consort, and," with a smile, "I trust you will give your hearty approval."

Everyone's breath was held in suspense, and when Lawyer Puck stepped to the side of the Princess the whole assembly acknowledged their joy by giving one big cheer.

The fairies joined hands and circling around the toadstool sang:

"Chaplets of laurel for Fernitta, our own
Princess, the sweetest that ever was known!
Princess Fernitta, this forever's our lay:
We'll be *modern* fairies forever and aye!"

The King and Queen were too over-

come at the turn of affairs, and simply embraced their daughter, while the fairies buffeted Lawyer Puck with buds and moss in the way of congratulation.

As the royal company with the Prince-elect drove away in the walnut car this was what echoed after them :

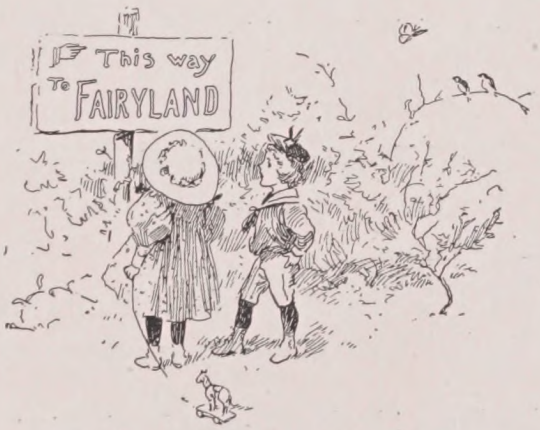
> " To-night we are old fairies free,
> To-morrow full of care we'll be ;
> To-night we'll sleep in flowers sweet,
> To-morrow night in houses neat ;
> Oh, modern little fairies we,
> Forevermore thus we shall be."

As soon as the Princess' trousseau was completed the wedding was solemnized. The ceremony was held in Titania Chapel, and directly after it the bridal couple were driven to the castle, where they held a reception.

A bridal tour was taken, but the perverse pair never would tell where they travelled, much to the disgust of curious ones.

Unbelieving mortals may sneer at the truth of these statements, but so occupied has Prince Puck been with government affairs that he has not found time to send his cards to mortals.

For further information concerning the nuptials send for a copy of the *Fairyland Evening Herald.*



Look out sharply, dearie, under waving meadow grasses,

Under flowers, under toadstools, where the sunlight flashes,

Look out, dearie, when you find a tiny hump of ashes,
Know you that little fairy gypsies have just passed that way.

You ask, where are the fairies? why not see them nowadays?
'Tis plain: because they are so busy in their many ways.
"Foreign missionary work"—they think that hardly pays.
Don't you wish they still came? "Yes," I'm sure you say.

Busy fairies! No lazy ones in Modern Fairyland;
If there be, they are doomed to exile on some foreign strand,
Ostracized, expelled forever from the fairy band,
Disgraced, disowned, forever,—forever and a day!

Look out! look out sharply, dearie!
Catch some stray vagabond!
Grab him firmly, hold him tightly,
And nab his wishing wand!

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